THE LIBRARY
ST. JOHN'S SEMINARY
BRIGHTON, MASSACHUSETTS

THE

CATHOLIC WEEKLY INSTRUCTOR;

Or, Miscellany of

RELIGIOUS, INSTRUCTIVE, AND ENTERTAINING KNOWLEDGE.

No. 33.—Vol. II. Saturday, August 16, 1845. {Price 1*d.* or, Stamped, 2*d.*

THE CHAPEL OF THE FOREST.

BY CANON SCHMID.

CHAPTER I.

THE PRAYER BOOK.

Conrad Ehrlied was a fine young fellow, glowing with all the health of early youth. By trade, he was a brazier; and to perfect himself in his art, he travelled for a space of three years into different countries; wherever he went, he conducted himself in an upright and becoming manner. One day, he was compelled by the excessive heat to travel under the shade of a thick forest; and he walked merrily along, with a well-stuffed bundle slung over his shoulder, and a knotty stick in one hand. Seeking to avoid the heat as much as possible, he left the road and wandered far into the thickest part of the wood, where he soon lost his way. For more than two hours he wandered about, without being able to discover the path again; and at last, he was so bewildered that he didn't know which way to turn, to find his road out. The sun was beginning to decline towards the west, and young Conrad now lost all hopes of finding any other asylum, during the night, than the thick trees under which he was walking. Full of uneasiness, and a prey to the thoughts which rose within him, at the sad prospect of passing a night in the forest, he nevertheless kept on his way, when suddenly he saw something bright shining in the distance. He redoubled his speed to discover whatever this could be, and he soon made it out to be the gilt weathercock that crowned the spire of a neat little chapel. The tower rose high into the air amidst the dark fir-trees, and the setting sun lit it up with his last rays. The sight of the little chapel renewed his courage, and he soon met with a pathway leading to the hill on which the oratory stood.

The nearer he approached to the chapel, the more was his heart rejoiced to find in this deserted forest a place where he might rest himself, and where he should not be exposed, during the night, to the fury of the wild beasts. It was, in fact, a charming spot. The little hillock, covered with a carpet of soft grass, rose up majestically amidst the aged trees: and on its summit the piety of the faithful had raised a beautiful chapel to the God of heaven. Its entrance was on the opposite side to that by which Conrad approached.

"Perhaps," said he, as he mounted the hill, "this little edifice owes its origin to some pious solitary, who fled from the contagion of the world to do penance in this quiet retreat! In fact, I remember to have heard formerly of fervent Christians, who used to bury themselves in the woods, there to expiate their sins and weep over the wickedness of the earth. Their modest little cells have been discovered, and more than one flourishing city has sprung up near the tomb of a holy hermit.

"Oh! how deeply was religion formerly engraved in men's hearts, how pure were their morals, how great their charity! In the first ages of Christianity, the pagan world was astonished at the sublime spectacle, displayed to the world by the disciples of the Gospel, whose virtues shone with such a brilliant light in the midst of the general corruption. The world had grown old in iniquity; the impure divinities, on whose altars they burnt incense, far from guiding men to virtue, afforded to their stupid votaries nothing but a monstrous assemblage of every sort of excess. At last, Christianity appeared: at the sound of its powerful voice, idolatry vanished from the earth like the mists of morning—it vanished, with its lying gods, the creatures of the imaginations of the poets—with its oracles of the devil—with its licentious morality, a lamentable example of the wanderings of the human understanding.

"What a blessing for us, to profess a holy religion, cemented by the blood of a God, and leading men to virtue! I have visited different countries: everywhere I have met with brothers; everywhere I have had the consolation of finding my religion, which is the same in every place, because it is the truth, and therefore cannot be changed. The sight of a church, dedicated to the services of the Catholic religion, always awakens a train of thoughts, useful and salutary to the Christian: I will, therefore, visit this asylum of piety. Long ago, my father earnestly advised me, never to pass any church I might meet on my way, without entering it. 'Churches,' he used to say, 'are built to teach us our duty to God: the tops of their spires rise up towards the sky, like a hand pointing out to us the way to Heaven.' 'How,' he would continue, 'could you pass by unnoticed, an opportunity of declaring your gratitude to God, and begging of Him to strengthen your weakness with His helping grace. Perhaps you might

there meet with some picture, or some master-piece of art, that would make an impression on your mind! Perhaps you might find, inscribed on the walls, some maxims that would fortify you in good, and teach you to curb your passions!' And this advice of my father was very wise and prudent advice; I am grateful to him for it."

Meanwhile the young traveller had reached the door of the modest chapel, and entered. Its silent vaults, its low narrow windows, its stained glass, revealing beautiful histories of holy bishops, who had prayed, and strong martyrs who had bled, the pale light of its sanctuary, its grey walls, made a deep impression on him, and awakened within him recollections of happy days, long since past, and of dear friends, now laid within the silent tomb: everything about him inspired him with feelings of devotion. He put his bundle and his stick in a corner, knelt down in the last bench near the door, and prayed for some time. His heart was moved more and more, and the anxieties that had annoyed him a short time before, were gradually growing calmer.

After having satisfied his devotion, he arose from his knees, and drew near the altar. It was of ancient workmanship, and its simplicity and beauty, called forth his warmest admiration. Looking round, he saw on a desk, placed before the altar, a beautiful little prayer-book. He opened the book, and the first thing that met his eye in it, struck him dumb with amazement. On the first blank page, he found his own name, in his own hand-writing. He examined the book attentively, and felt more and more convinced that this name had been formerly written by himself. He could not, by any means, account for this discovery, and thought it must be all imagination. He turned over the leaves from one end to the other: the picture at the beginning—it was Jesus blessing the little children: the prayers themselves: many maxims, written on loose leaves, all of which he remembered well; everything he met confused him more and more. "This book formerly belonged to me," said he, full of wonder, "I wrote my name in it, while I was still at school; but how ever could it have found its way into this chapel, in the depths of the forest? All this puzzles me."

A thousand recollections of his infancy rushed upon his mind. The desire of once more seeing his dear friends burst on his soul, and a flood of unwilling tears filled his eyes. "O God!" said he, kneeling down before the desk, "what good parents thou didst bestow upon me! What happy days I passed with them! I recall, with delight, those blessed moments, when my tender mother, occupied with some household labour, would gather her children about her, to speak to us of Thy love, and to point out to us the ardent charity Thy Son had for us, when he gave himself up to death on the cross, in order to save us and open for us the gates of Heaven!

"And how often, when our poor father was returning from his daily toil, has he affectionately embraced us, answering all our little questions, and telling us such stories as might inspire us with virtue and piety! And oh! what happiness for me and my little sister, when they allowed us to work in the garden, and to plant or water the flowers!

"But cruel war drove us all from our home, and scattered us into different countries. Alas! it is many years since sorrow and affliction carried my poor mother to her grave; and the very hand, that formerly gave me the little book which I have just found again, is long since mouldered into dust in the silent tomb. Perhaps my dear father has followed her, and his last moments, too, like hers, may have been embittered by grief and sorrow: and during all these years past, I have heard nothing of him. And my sister, where is she? Is she still living?

"Alone and separated from my own, I live isolated in the world; Thou alone, O God! remainest to me! Thou alone knowest where my sister and my father are. Oh! if either of them be now living, be pleased to unite us once more. God of mercy! have pity on me, and hear the prayer which my father addressed to Thee, when I saw him for the last time; grant me the blessings he invoked upon me, when he gave me his last benediction, and bade me always put my whole trust in Thee."

CHAPTER II.

CONRAD AND LOUISA.

So thought Conrad, and so he prayed. At length he rose: "Although this book once belonged to me, I dare not take it with me, for I can no longer look on it as my property. I think some one must have forgotten it here, and will come to look for it before nightfall: I will wait a little; and who knows but that, by its means, I may learn some news of my family?"

He then took up the book, sat down on one of the benches, and read several pages with feelings of indescribable pleasure. All at once, he saw a girl of very modest appearance, enter the chapel: she might have been about sixteen years of age. She drew near the altar, made a profound inclination before it, and knelt down to say her prayers. "O my God!" said she, looking anxiously about her, "it is gone. I would rather have lost anything else in the world." She then sought again for some moments, prayed for a short time, and then retired sad and pensive.

Conrad, whom she had not perceived, rose book in hand, and followed. He soon overtook her, and said in a kind tone, "No doubt it was you, my good Madam, that left this book on the desk?"

"Yes, Sir, it was I;" and her eyes beamed with pleasure at the sight of the treasure she had looked upon as lost. "Yes, it is mine; you will find the name *Conrad Ehrlieb*, written on the first page of it."

"It seems you prize the book; might I be allowed to ask you why? My question may perhaps appear to you impertinent, but the fact is, that the name of *Conrad Ehrlieb*, is not altogether unknown to me. I have it in my power to give you sure and certain intelligence respecting that young man."

"Oh! if you could, you would render me truly happy. This *Conrad Ehrlieb*, is closely connected with me. Many travellers pretend that they have met him in different countries; but their reports have never been confirmed. Since you say that you are acquainted with Conrad Ehrlieb, I will relate to you a few facts about my family and my fortunes: you will then be able to see, if it be the same person you mean.

"My father held a post under government, on the Rhine. War, and the conquest of our country by foreign troops, made him leave his native land. His prince, who had just been stripped of his possessions, and who was reduced to a very wretched condition, could do nothing for him. My father's situation became most miserable: and the heavy misfortunes that fell upon him, carried my mother hastily to her grave. This loss afflicted him very sensibly, more particularly as, with two children, my brother and myself, he would find great difficulty in going from one part of the country to another, in search of employment. A good-hearted brazier, in a little town, where my father rested a day, and who had no children, said he would take care of my brother, teach him his own trade, and bring him up as his son. My father willingly fell in with this proposal; and, a few days after, wished my brother good bye, and set out with me. We travelled a long way; but I was so young at the time, that I cannot remember the names of any of the countries we passed through.

"My father at last fell sick, and, after some weeks of suffering, died: and no doubt, his last moments were embittered by the reflection, that he was leaving behind him two poor orphans, destitute of human help.

"At that time, I was but six years of age, and now it is ten years since I lost the best of fathers. A charitable lady received me into her house. The night before his death, my father desired the good man, in whose house he was lying ill, to inform the brazier of his decease, in order that the sad intelligence might thus reach my brother's ears, and to beg that he would still continue to act as a father to the poor boy, for whom he never ceased pouring out the most touching prayers. With trembling fingers he wrote on a paper the name of the little town and of the brazier, with whom my brother was living. This paper was unfortunately destroyed by a servant who could not read. She tore it up while arranging the room in which my father breathed his last. Since that moment, I have never learnt anything certain about my brother; I have shed many tears for him; and, God knows, I have never let a day pass, without thinking of him and praying for him. My mistress exhausted every source of information to no purpose—she could learn nothing of him; in fact, no one could tell us whether he were still alive or not. This little book is the only relic I have of my family, and although I did not get it from him, still there is his name in it, written by himself, and that makes it a dear memorial to me. I found it in the bottom of a chest that used to belong to my father. The book was forgotten, when my father left Conrad with the good brazier; and thus it fell into my hands. And oh! should I ever find my long-lost brother, how happy shall I be! But I dare not indulge such a hope again; I must resign myself to God's will, and remain an orphan in the world." And as she said these words, she wiped away a tear, which she would fain have hidden from the traveller. Her grief was enough to break the young man's heart; and more than once it required a great effort to prevent his interrupting her as she spoke.

"My God!" he exclaimed, "what goodness you show me! Is not your name Louisa, my dear child?"

"Yes," answered the girl with astonishment, "my name is Louisa Ehrlieb"

"Then, a thousand times welcome, my beloved sister, I am your brother, Conrad Ehrlieb. It was I that wrote the name in the prayer-book."

At first, the girl looked at him with astonishment, not knowing how to explain this happy meeting.

A few moments they stood in silence, when Conrad took his sister by the hand, and led her to the foot of the altar.

(To be continued.)

THE DYING MONK.

[We beg to apologize to our readers for inserting an irrelevant passage from the Life of De Rancé, in page 322 of the Instructor. The following account ought to have preceded the ballad there introduced.]

"The wonders of asceticism and rigorous self-denial which are recorded of the early members of La Trappe would have been worthy of the solitaries of Thebaid; and had Pachomius been admitted to contemplate that community, he would have been proud to acknowledge them as brothers. The monks, though living in the same house, were strangers to one another. Each one followed to the choir, the garden, or the refectory, the feet that were moving before him, but he never raised his eyes to discover to whom the feet belonged.

"There were some who passed the entire year of their novitiate without lifting up their eyes, and who, after that long period, could not tell how the ceiling of their cells was constructed, or whether they had any ceilings at all. There is mention made of one whose only anxiety was for an only brother whom he had left leading a scandalous and disorderly life in the world. Since he entered the convent he never passed a day without shedding a tear over his miserable condition, and begging for him from God the grace of repentance and amendment. On his dying bed he asked one request of the abbot—it was, for a continuance of his prayers for the same purpose. De Rancé retired for a moment, and returned with one of the most useful and valued members of the brotherhood. When the cowl, which concealed his features, was removed, the dying monk recognized the brother for whom he had so often wept and prayed."

Thought is the chief gift of nature; the talent of explaining it, is the chief gift of art.

How many skins are softer than the mind and the heart that they inclose.

LINES

Addressed to a Young Lady who had expressed her intention to the Author of quitting the World and entering into Religion.

If, as you say, you now to God aspire,
Cherish this grace and keep alive this fire;
Then shall its sacred flames, more warm than bright,
Convey your warmer wishes to his sight,
And like the vestals then shall your's ascend,
To show your love for God can have no end.

By frequent acts of faith, and hope, and love,
The saints ascended to their God above;
By love do you your chosen path pursue,
Adhere to God and bid this world adieu:
This advice, daughter, I as guide impart,
Do you, as scholar, nurture in your heart.

In sweet retirement should you wish to live,
And to your Lord your heart and soul to give,
Where no distracting cares the soul molest,
Nor fierce contending passions break her rest,
Where no vain doubts or fears the heart control,
To check the workings of the inmost soul,

Where all are happy, innocent, and wise,
Open as day, and strangers to disguise,
Where manna flows, the soul's delicious feast,
Which fills the heart and palls not on the taste,
Where all they want they find, they seek no more,
For God's their treasure, and content their store.

Oh, should you wish to breathe this pure air,
And live and die midst allies ever fair,
First learn the virtues of this happy state,
From thence your calling you may safely date;
Let prayer be your delight, you then will know
What peace and virtue, e'en on earth bestow

Learn to be humble, charitable, meek,
In God, not man, your strength and comfort seek;
Be fervent, contrite, patient, and sincere,
With others easy, with yourself severe;
Be modest, ready, unassuming, true,
And of your choice you never need to rue.

Assume a character both firm and sweet,
Fix'd though obedient, cheerful though discreet;
And whilst children, like fond worldlings, ever build
Houses of cards, and all their playthings gild,
Be it your care to soar above this life,
Where all is envy, folly, pride, and strife.

Shut out the world and all that worldlings prize,
And in their stead let heavenly objects rise;
Seek not fruition here, but humbly wait
That bless'd reversion in a future state;
A jealous Master you are call'd to serve,
Which favours only pious souls deserve.

You must give him all, he will not take a part,
Nor can he bear a self-divided heart;
If softer nature find these terms too hard,
Look to the heavens, for there is your reward;
Look to the saints, behold their blissful life,
And nature soon will terminate the strife.

Love God alone, our troubles then will cease,
Love, 'tis only love can cause a lasting peace;
But should new trials come in to cloud your face,
And damp the ardour of your heavenly race,
Should satan, or the world, or self intrude,
To break the charms of your woo'd solitude,

First think on death, on judgment, heaven and hell,
The few elect, the many lost; then tell
The shortness of this life, the length of next,
And there you'll see the justness of my text:
Alarmed, you shrink into your hallow'd cell—
Where heavenly peace and sweet contentment dwell—
And bid to nature and to self farewell.

Now enter here to seek a life of ease,
They please most who most desire to please;
Sickness and crosses cherish as your friends,
As useful monitors, which Heaven sends
To lead you by the safer way to death,
And of self-love to stifle every breath.

Sufferings to joys whilst joys to sufferings lead,
Here we must bear our cross or bear it when dead;
If nature faint, on God with fervour call,
He who leans on self is certain soon to fall;
His ear is open, open is his eye,
He sees your penance and he hears your cry.

No wish, nor tear, nor sob, nor silent sigh,
Can heave unseen or pass unnoticed by;
Unbounded confidence in Jesus place,
Or vain our hope to see his happy face.

Should faith, and hope, and love, their rights maintain,
And blind obedience come in to crown the train,
Your enemies, united, may your peace assail,
But with all their spite none ever shall prevail;
Exclusive friendship form with God above,
No other object can deserve your love.

With him commune by day, with him by night,
And like the saints walk always in his sight,
With eye that simple turn to God alone,
And Mary, for his child, our Lord will own;
To her he'll prove a Shield, a Guide, a Friend,
Her mind illuminate, her affections mend.

Through hidden paths he'll lead her by the hand,
To join her Saviour and his chosen band,
Where all in chorus shall for ever sing,
The mercies of their Father, Spouse, and King.

THE ORIGINAL USE OF TITHE.

Not a single national document relative to the subject has come down to us, in which the right of the poor to a considerable portion of the tithe is not distinctly recognised. In the compilation which goes under the name of Archbishop Egbert, we meet with the following canon:—"Let the mass-priests themselves receive the tithes from the people, and keep a written list of the names of all who have given, and divide, in presence of men fearing God, the tithe according to the authority of the canons; and choose the first portion for the adornment of the church, and let them distribute humbly and mercifully with their own hands the second portion for the benefit of poor and wayfaring men; and then may they retain the third portion for themselves."—*Dr. Lingard's History of the Anglo-Saxon Church.*

TESTIMONY OF THOSE OUT OF THE CHURCH.

No. 5.

ON THE NON-EXISTENCE OF PROTESTANTISM BEFORE THE TIME OF MARTIN LUTHER.

If a certain book of Homilies, containing one and twenty in number, and which the ministers of the protestant church are called upon to read "diligently and distinctly," there is one entitled "Against Peril of Idolatry." In this Homily there is a very remarkable admission, from which we may draw as remarkable a conclusion, which the composers of the Homilies never supposed would be used as a weapon against the protestant church. The passage is to this effect, that laity and clergy, learned and unlearned, all ages, sects, and degrees of men, women, and children of all Christendom, "have been at once drowned in abominable idolatry, of all other vices most detested of God and most damnable to men, and that for the space of eight hundred years and more." Now what a modest, gentle, and charitable declaration this! What a nice way of telling us, that the whole of Christendom, for eight hundred years and more before protestantism had "a local habitation and a name," was Catholic! How blindly, yet thoroughly, does error condemn itself! Why, if protestantism, the religion of the "forty stripes save one," is the true one, we wonder where it was during the said eight hundred years and more of detestable and damnable idolatry. Verily do the framers of the "godly and wholesome doctrine," of the Homilies pronounce sentence against themselves. After this general and sweeping declaration against Christendom, and, of course, against protestantism, if any existence it had, we will as usual proceed to lay before our readers the surprising concessions of our learned opponents on this important head, viz. the non-existence of protestantism before the days of Luther.

1. In the preface to his works, and in various places of his writings, the magnanimous father of the Reformation, Martin Luther, honestly and candidly tells us, that in his first attempt he stood alone. His continual boast was: "Primo Solus eram—at first I was alone, I rolled the stone by myself, alone in danger, forsaken by all, aided by none." Vide Pref. operum, tom. 1. tom. 2. folio 6, &c. This standing alone "high on a hill apart" Luther seems to have considered glorious in the extreme; to every reflecting mind it will appear in a very different light, it will exhibit him as a daring adventurer and a presumptuous founder of a new system of faith, with himself standing alone against the world, and the world against him.

2. Dr. Tillotson, Sermon 49. p. 7, makes the following confession: "In the beginning of the Reformation, when popery had overrun those western parts, and had subdued her enemies *on every side*, and antichrist sat securely in the quiet possession of his kingdom, Luther arose, a bold and rough man (one, says Hallam, who bellowed in bad Latin), but a fit wedge to cleave asunder so hard and knotty a block, and for a long time stood alone." Tillotson certainly pays the pope some queer compliments, but assuredly he does great honour to the Catholic Church, clearly showing her extensive dominion, and clearly confessing that whilst Luther stood alone, he had decidedly the rest of Christendom, consequently the true church against him.

3. Calvin too, Epis. 114, has a similar acknowledgment: "We have been obliged to break off from the communion of the *whole world*, which Slaidan calls bearing the brunt of the whole globe."

4. Jewell assures us, "That the truth (protestantism we opine) was both *unknown* and *unheard* of, when Martin Luther first came to the knowledge of the gospel." See his Apol. B. 4. c. 4.

5. Dr. White, Defence of his Way, c. 37. p. 136, says: "Popery was a leprosy breeding so universally in the church, that there was no *visible* company of men in the world free from it. Fairies only could have professed protestancy in those days."

6. "In times past *no* religion but the popish had place in he church," says Whitaker, Con. 4. Quest 5. c. 3.

7. Perkins in his work on the Creed, p. 400, comes out with the truth still more boldly; he says: "Before Luther such a universal apostacy had overspread the whole face of the earth, that the protestant church was not *visible any* where."

8. Mr. Napier, On the Revelation, p. 161, says: "From the year 316, (nine years before the first general council of Nice in 325,) God withdrew his visible church from outward assemblies to the hearts of godly men. The pope and his clergy for the space of 1260 years possessing the outward visible church of christians, and never suffering for the space of 1000 years after Sylvester the first any to be seen visible of the true." See also Hospinian, Ep. 141. Norton. p. 145. It is lamentable to see many driven to such pitiable subterfuges as an invisible church to account for the non-existence of protestantism. What in fact is an invisible church but a phantom, a chimera, a non-entity, of which we have no type or shadow in the pages of the sacred Scripture. How hard to acknowledge the truth, and confess the transparent fact, that protestantism had no being, was never dreamed of, before the days of Luther!

9. Ask Chillingworth why the multifarious sects of protestants have been compelled to own the invisibility of their respective creeds and communions for so many ages, and he will supply you with an answer: "Because they were convinced, by all manner of evidence, as scripture, reason and antiquity, that all the visible churches in the world had degenerated from the purity of the gospel." c. 5. sec. 13. p. 247. Thus, as Dr. Fletcher very justly remarks, "Upon the testimony of the best authorities which protestantism can boast, it is admitted, that the date of its origin is not anterior to the opening of the sixteenth century; and that if that only be apostolical (as only it is) which reaches from the time of the apostles to any determinate period, then is not the religion of protestantism possessed of this sacred character." Ser. vol. 2. p. 275.

10. No wonder, then, that the arch-reformer should have paused and shuddered, as he says he did, when he contemplated the yawning gulf beneath his feet. In his book on the Abrogation of the Mass, fol. 224, he has the following remarkable words: "Quoties mihi palpitavit tremulum cor? Et reprehendens objecit eorum fortissimum et unicum argumentum: Tu solus sapis? Totne errant universi?" &c. "How often did my trembling heart beat within me? And in reprehensive tone object to me the very formidable and striking argument of those, who said to me! What, art thou alone possessed of wisdom; and are all the dupes of error except thee? Have so many ages past in ignorance? What, if thou shouldst be the mistaken man? What if damned thyself, thou shouldst lead others into damnation?" See Luther's Works, Tom. 2. Edit. Jena, fol. 9.

From the few extracts, that we have placed before our readers from protestant writers, it is beyond question, that protestantism, which actually owes its name to its protestation against and opposition to the Catholic Church, had no existence prior to the sixteenth century. And if it had no existence anterior to this period (as assuredly it had not), then from its own mouth we pronounce its sentence: it has not a shadow of pretension to be the church of Christ. Ex ore tuo judico.

The lives of some of the most eminent of the saints furnish subjects for the decorations of many title-pages. In the title-page to the "*Prymer of Salisbury*," printed about the middle of the 16th century, there is a beautiful cut towards the top of the page, and the space beneath is filled up with the following singular supplication:

"God be in my bede,
And in my understandynge,
God be in my eyen,
And in my lokynge;
God be in my mouthe,
And in my spekynge,
God be in my herte,
And in my thinkynge;
God be at mine end,
And at my departynge."

MONKS AND MONASTERIES,

BEING AN ACCOUNT OF ENGLISH MONASTERIES.

(By Samuel Fox, M. A., Rector of Morley, Derbyshire.)

It is a charge sometimes made against the Religious Orders in this country, and we fear with some justice, that they have done little of late years to make their countrymen acquainted with the nature of the holy systems under which they live. Since the period called the Reformation, the proper idea of a monk has almost died out of the English mind; half of the middle classes can form no other notion of him, than of a strange and extinct being, composed of sloth, sensuality, and superstition, while the other half give him credit for having possessed intellect indeed, but intellect devoted only to fraud, secret and fearful crime, and to the establishment of all sorts of slavery. As to the working classes they cannot for the most part represent to themselves, or to those with whom they converse, what kind of a man exactly a monk may be, nor are they quite sure that he is man at all; but if the outline of monastic character be vague and portentous to them, they have a tolerable certainty, should they ever want more precise information, that it may be obtained, and largely, in the tracts left now and then on their tables, or in their own or neighbour's copy of the Book of Martyrs. Of course the popular declaimers against the Catholic Church and its Institutions do all they can to maintain this misty atmosphere of horror, regarding monks and their deeds over the minds of the crowd, and if they allow it to be rolled away, and for a moment to present a more definite form of the enemy, that form is so horrid and ridiculous that no portrait from the hand of man can be more so.

> "A hideous picture of their foes they drew,
> No line, no colour, and no meaning true,
> —And yet the daubing pleases."

Why should this system of misrepresentation be suffered to continue without an effort to overthrow it? Why should the greatest benefactors of Europe, who gave Christianity to these islands, preserved for us whatever we possess of ancient knowledge, and discovered for us the very alphabets and most important elements of every art and science in which we now pride ourselves, be longer regarded with aversion, and deprived of the love and lasting gratitude to which they are so justly entitled? And why should that system of life and training be unknown and therefore ridiculed, which has produced such patient, self-sacrificing, and learned teachers? Let the children of St. Benedict, St. Dominic, and St. Ignatius begin directly to instruct the British public in books from a penny upwards, in the real nature of the rules under which they live, the obligations laid upon them, and the times they must devote to prayer, study, and the service of their neighbour; let them give popular accounts adapted to the capacities of children and all sorts of men, of the heroic exploits of their brethren, undertaken certainly for no selfish purpose whatever, and at a boundless expenditure of money, time, and mind. What stores of profitable and instructive information can they lay open! what interesting narratives of tribes and nations brought by them to a knowledge of the gospel and of civilization! What affecting and sublime instances of individual courage and devotion! Such books, small and great, will give the highest honour to God, reverence to His church, and well-earned repute to the monastic law and character; the infidel and sectary will be reduced to silence and admiration; the unreflecting crowd, the great portion of every people, will devour these stories because they are marvellous, and will be bettered by them because they are true; and monks and monasteries now associated in the imaginations of the British nation with idleness and vice, through the calumnies of foes and apathy of friends, will be restored to merited and general esteem.

The filial duty which we are now recommending, has been partially performed for the regulars by a stranger, a Protestant clergyman. Without making any comment on the unseemliness of leaving such an office to such a person, we may take up his work in the want of a better, and make such extracts from it as will instruct and edify our readers. The author in the Preface discusses the practicability of reviving monastic houses in connexion with the church established by law in this country, and his own wishes may be collected from the following passage:

THE FRUITS WHICH THE REVIVAL OF MONASTERIES WOULD PRODUCE.

"A fearful picture is presented by the population which we see rising up around us, in a state of religious destitution and ignorance, from which little can be expected but immorality and vice: for although the hand of private bounty has been freely extended, and unwearied exertions have been made to carry the inspired volume into many a court and alley in which an all but heathen ignorance prevails, yet comparatively little has been done in our densely-populated towns, from the want of combination; and every day's occurrence proves the truth of this, and shows the utter impossibility of ameliorating the condition of the outcasts of society, with the present insufficient and defective machinery. If, however, monasteries were once more established, and adapted, not merely to the altered condition of the Anglican Church, but to the present state of the country, the people who now feel themselves despised and neglected, would at the gate of the monastery learn that their sufferings were not unheeded. There they might, perhaps, be induced to forget the exasperating influence of the Poor Laws: and while the inmate of the monastery sought in his daily rounds the abode of poverty, and the chamber of sorrow, it is impossible to over estimate the moral influence which such societies would exercise over a widely extended sphere, which is now, for the most part, abandoned to the worst passions of mankind. Nor would their influence be one whit the less in bringing up the rising generation in those sound principle which are truly designated the "nurture and admonition of the Lord." Through these means, which would be far more powerful than the present operations of the excellent National School Society, our youth would probably be kept in that straight, but narrow path, which the Church of Christ prescribes; and thus in a great measure would be preserved from wandering into the seductive mazes of error.

"The various offices which a monastic system would require its members to perform, would afford a suitable training for the ministry of the Church, for those who having already graduated at our Universities, are still inexperienced in parochial

duties. Thus while the theological student was lightening the duties which are necessarily oppressive in a crowded population, and rendering the ministrations of the Church far more effective than they otherwise could possibly be, he would be qualifying himself for the profitable discharge of the higher and more responsible duties of the Church, whenever the entire charge of a parish should be entrusted to his care. The want of this sort of training has often been felt in our branch of the Church, and various schemes have been proposed in order to remedy the deficiency; but none appear to offer such unexceptionable advantages as a reformed monastic establishment, under the control of the Bishop of the diocese in which it might be situated.

"Great as would be the advantage in other respects in a revival of monastic institutions, their efficiency would, perhaps, be most powerfully recognised in subduing the selfish influences of the age common to every commercial community, and generating the seeds of their destruction: thus wholesomely directing the energies of national development. That much danger at present exists from our national advancement no one can deny; neither can we be blind to the disastrous effects which have resulted from the wholesale spoliation of the Anglican Church in the sixteenth century."

The author proceeds in the next place to give a rapid sketch of the origin of monachism, and of the earliest establishments in the East. Before a just opinion of the monastic system can be formed, he rightly remarks, we must know its real nature, whence it originated, and what its object was; and in doing this, we must throw aside as much as possible the *prejudices* which are apt to be engendered by the discovery of abuses, or by the repetition of calumnies which indifference or hatred has propagated.

"It commenced with those wandering recluses, who, shutting themselves out from the commerce of the world, passed the whole of their life in solitary retirement.* Such devotion could not long escape the observation which it shunned, and the celebrity which these austerities acquired, was witnessed by the withdrawal from the world of numerous followers.

"As soon as monastics associated together, and formed themselves into regular societies, it became necessary to frame certain rules by which they might be governed; and which being understood and acknowledged by all the members of the society, preserved them from those irregularities and dissensions, which would otherwise have unavoidably arisen. The earliest of these rules were those formed by St. Basil, and they were of a particularly Scriptural character, and formed, as it were, a practical commentary upon those portions of Sacred Writ, relating to the duty which we owe to God, as well as that which is due to our fellow-creatures. As monastic bodies, however, multiplied, these rules were found insufficient for their government, especially since men, in after times, were induced to join them occasionally from motives of convenience, as well as from those which arose from a true devotional feeling.†

"In the preface to the rules which St. Basil prescribed for the observance of the monks of his time, he enforced the obligation, which is incumbent upon all who teach, to remain faithful to the doctrines in which *they* had been instructed, and to be always ready to afford information to the ignorant. In thus conveying instruction, they were to be guided by the attainments of those who sought for knowledge, reserving the mysteries of the faith for the ears of those who, as they judged, had made such a progress in religious knowledge, as really to profit from being instructed in the deep and awful mysteries of our holy religion. He insisted upon the necessity of the monks employing all their time either in the congregations, or in retirement, and only to devote those hours to rest which nature absolutely required; thus following the example of David, in meditating on the law of God both day and night. He considered that, by being united together in a fraternity, they would be better able to impart instruction to each other; and he enforced this duty of mutual instruction by a reference to St. Paul's apprehension of danger if he preached not the Gospel, as well as our Lord's declaration of the increased punishment which would fall upon that servant, who, knowing his Lord's will, prepared not himself, neither did according to His will.*

"The rules which follow are ninety-five in number, and embraced all those particulars which the circumstances of the times required.†

"The rules which more particularly apply to monastics, are contained in twenty-five chapters, the first enjoins the monks to live together for the sake of mutual help, comfort, instruction, exercise of virtue, efficacy of prayer, and security from danger.

2. "That none without trial should be admitted into their fraternity.

3. "That they should dispose of their wealth to the poor and needy.

4. "That children, with the consent of their parents, in presence of witnesses, may be admitted.

5. "That stinted measure be appointed for eating and drinking.

6. "That their apparel be plain and decent, and that they wear a girdle.

7. "That, next to God, they be obedient to their superior.

8. "Declares the good qualities which their superiors ought to have.

9. "That the superior of the monastery first reprove the offenders with meekness and gentleness; but if they prove obstinate, and will not be reclaimed, then he is to account them as heathens and publicans.

10. "That he suffer not the least offence to pass unreproved.

11. "That they confess their faults to those who are the dispensers of holy mysteries.

12. "That they should possess all things in common.

13. "That men of estates render to their kindred what is their due, and the remainder to the poor.

14. "That none that are entered return to their parents' houses, unless to give them instructions; and that is to be done by permission of their superiors.

15. "That whosoever defames, or patiently hears his brother defamed, be excommunicated.

16. "That no man do his own will in the monastery, or the least thing, without the superior's leave.

17. "That they debar no man from entering into the convent upon trial, or give him any offence.

18. "That the measure of eating and fasting be set by the superior.

19. "That he who scorns to receive a garment, when presented to him, ought not to receive it when he afterwards asks for it.

20. "That those who by their own fault do not come to dinner at the fixed time, ought not to eat till the next day, at the same hour.

* Cassian, lib. 5., c. 36.
† See Basil, de Inst. Monach., p. 533, et seq.

* 1 Cor., ix., 16.; St. Luke xii. 47.
† Rodolph. Hospiniani de Monach. lib. iii., c. iii. This writer, from whom we have quoted, was a fierce Zuinglian; but the extravagance of his theological views does not invalidate his accuracy as an historian.

21. "That none ought to give the least thing to the poor, but by the hands of those who are ordained for that office.

22. "That they should be careful of the utensils appertaining to the monastery, no less than if they were the holy vessels belonging to the altar.

23. "That they must apply themselves to handy-crafts, that so they may be helpful to others.

24. "That, as a token of humility, they wear sackcloth, and speak with moderation.

25. "That the monks are not to discourse alone with women.

"Besides these twenty-five chapters, there is another wholly monastic, but which appertains to him who is the director of the nuns:—

"That when he confesses a nun, or a recluse, he ought to do so with decency, in the presence of the abbess.

"These are St. Basil's monastic institutes, and these with different modifications, formed the basis of the monastic rules by which our earliest monasteries were governed.

"The monks, who were associated under these rules, were partly priests, and partly laymen. As an order this flourished particularly in the east, where almost all those who lived in monasteries, or cells, followed the rules herein prescribed."

Surely the Protestant reader and the author of this book must be struck by reference to usages in these rules observed in this country at this time by Catholics alone. Confession, and celibacy, and voluntary poverty, so frequently denounced as the corruptions of the middle or dark ages, are found in these rules to be well-known to the times of St. Basil.

THE AUSTERITIES OF THE MONKS.

"The most correct idea of the austerities attendant on the monastic life, may be formed from the description of it which St. Basil himself has given. In a letter which he wrote to St. Gregory Nazianzene, he states that the food of monastics consisted of bread and water, and herbs, and was limited to one meal a-day. He only allowed them to sleep till midnight, when they were to rise for prayer. 'Cookery with us,' said he, 'is idle. No knife is familiar with blood; our daintiest meal is vegetables, with coarsest bread, and vapid wine.' Nor was he averse to practise the austerities which he prescribed. In the account which St. Gregory gave of his friend, St. Basil, after his death, he says, 'that he had but one inner and outer garment; his bed was the ground; little sleep; no bath; his food bread and salt; his drink the running stream.' Such was the course of life pursued by St. Basil—a course which, while it vindicated him from being influenced by any unworthy motives in thus associating together men of like devotional feelings, ought to check that supercilious contempt, which is now-a-days too often expressed for external mortifications; as though a truce had been proclaimed between the flesh and the spirit; and that Christians of the present day were exempt from 'the law of' their members warring against the law of their minds, and bringing them into captivity to the law of sin, which is in their members.'* It is nothing to the purpose to urge that outward mortifications are sometimes made the substitute for inward holiness; they are unnaturally situated when thus placed in contra-position, and the argument which is hence brought against all kinds of self-mortification, is founded upon an abuse of an apostolical institution, and leads to conclusions as unwise as they are untrue.† The men who prescribed the discipline of the cloister, were men of unquestionable piety, and their extant remains show that they were, moreover, men of sound and discriminating judgment; therefore, instead of passing an unqualified censure on any of their institutions, we ought, at least, to respect their motives; while their trials and sufferings should reprove our love of self-indulgence, and lead us to follow their steps, were it but at an humble distance, instead of filling our minds with the conceited notion of our superior wisdom, in avoiding those austerities, which were of old employed in subjecting the body, with its affections and lusts, to the regulating guidance of the mind.*

EARLIEST MONASTIC ORDERS.

"The monastic orders were at first distributed into two distinct classes, one of which received the denomination of Cœnobites; the other of Eremites, or Hermits. These names were derived from the general habits of the two classes; the Cœnobites living together in a fixed habitation, and forming one large community, under the superintendence of a chief, whom they called father, or abbot—this word signifying father; while the Eremites continued to dwell in perfect seclusion, and pursued that course of life which first distinguished the ascetics from ordinary Christians. After the establishment of monasteries in this country, many Eremites, or Hermits,† continued to dwell in seclusion, and the memory of these devotees is not unfrequently preserved in the traditions of some of our rural districts, and in the names which the reverence of former ages gave to places which were considered to possess a certain degree of sanctity, from having been the abodes of such men.

"Whether, however, they lived a solitary life, or whether they were associated in societies, they were in the constant habit of using such austerities and exercise, as were deemed requisite for the attainment of that spirituality of mind after which they sought. 'Facito aliquid operis, ut te semper diabolus inveniat occupatum'—*i. e.*, always be employed, that the devil may find you busy, was the advice of St. Jerome to Rusticus,‡ when the latter was about to enter upon the monastic life; and, as idleness was always considered to be attended with no little danger to the inner man, certain hours were set apart in each day for manual labour, as well as reading, prayer, and other holy exercises."§

SEAL ENGRAVING.

ALTHOUGH most persons have examined seals and gems cut on cornelian stones and other hard fossil substances, yet a great deal of ignorance prevails as to the method employed in cutting devices and legends upon their surfaces. In the first place, the iron instrument, or graver, made use of, which those not acquainted with the art suppose to have been hardened and made into steel, is heated in a way diametrically opposite. It is made as soft as possible, and is then placed on a small lathe, and turned to whichever pattern may be required for cutting the stone, and being from its softness porous, receives the diamond dust, ground very fine in a mortar, which adheres to it, and forms a cutting tool of irresistible power, temper, and hardness, and with the assistance of an upper and lower wheel, produces so great a velocity, that no farther power is required but the hand of the artist, to guide and direct its motions according to the nature of the device to be cut on the stone. This very ingenious process is in daily operation at the London Polytechnic Institution. It may be as well to mention, that a likeness of her majesty has been cut in this way, and also a splendid portrait of a lion on cornelian.—*Critic.*

* Rom. vii. 23. † Rom. viii. 13; 1 Cor. ix. 27; Col. iii. 5.

* "Alas! the evil desire of unlawful lust disquiets the mind of almost every living man. As the bee shall perish when she stings anything angrily, so shall every soul perish after unlawful lust, unless the man turn to good.'—*Boeth. A. S. version*, c. xxxi. li.

† These were also called Anchorites,—a word derived from the Greek word Ἀναχωρέω—to withdraw from society.

‡ Epist. ad. Rust. Monach. De vivendi formâ.

§ "The Beginner of a Monastic Life," by Twisden, p. 15.

A LETTER OF INSTRUCTION,

OR, A SHORT INTRODUCTION TO MEDITATION FOR NUNS AND OTHER RELIGIOUS PERSONS.

I CONGRATULATE you, N. N. on the great happiness which you enjoy of being called to a religious state; this is so inestimable a blessing, that none can ever fully appreciate it during this life; in heaven only we shall be able to know its value; there we shall gratefully say, "Oh how great a blessing was that which was bestowed upon us on earth!" But at the same time I will not conceal from you, that the religious life is one fraught with labours and trials of every description. If this principle be true regarding all Religious Orders, much more is it so with regard to *our* congregation, where we have to work so much for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. How shall we be able to bear up against these difficulties during the whole of life? Fear not, N. N., we cannot conquer them of ourselves, it is true, but with the grace and assistance of God we shall become a match for every difficulty. God will be with us; he will tender us his help, provided we ask it of him with humility, and punctually perform all that is required by him on our part.

Now, one of the first and most prominent of our duties is the holy exercise of prayer and meditation. These are the channels through which we shall draw down the divine blessings upon us; by means of these we shall obtain all the graces necessary for insuring our sanctification; without them we shall never be able to become good Religious. It is, therefore, incumbent upon me to teach you these holy exercises, and it is your duty to listen with attention, that you may learn and practise them well. I will now make some remarks upon prayer in general, afterwards we will speak more in particular of meditation. We will proceed by way of question and answer, giving some explanation or declaration of the answers given.

1. What is prayer?

Ans. By prayer we understand a kind of intercourse between us and God; and this is carried on by raising up our minds and hearts to him, by asking something of him, by praising him, thanking him, &c.

Declaration. Hence you may gather how exalted and holy an office is prayer, since by it a poor worm of the earth may attain to an intimate union with God, who is the source of all perfection. How happy then are we who are called to converse much with God! How diligent ought we to be in this holy exercise!

2. How many kinds of prayer are there?

Ans. Two; vocal and mental.

3. What is vocal prayer?

Ans. It is an expression of pious interior affections by exterior words.

Declaration. Remark therefore, that if in our heart there be no feelings towards God, the words which we utter with our mouth would be no prayer at all; for vocal prayer is but an expression of the feelings of our heart, consequently, where there are no feelings there can be no prayer.

4. What is mental prayer?

Ans. It is a *secret* intercourse between our soul and God, carried on in the interior of our heart without any exterior demonstration.

Declaration. If this intercourse be momentary it is called an ejaculation; but if it be continued for any considerable time, it is called meditation or contemplation.

5. What is meditation?

Ans. Meditation is a serious application of our mind and heart to some truth of salvation.

Declaration. It is not sufficient, then, barely to apply our minds, we must apply also our hearts.

6. How many parts has meditation?

Ans. Three parts; viz., preparation, consideration, and conclusion.

7. What ought our preparation to be?

Ans. It ought to be twofold, remote and immediate.

8. In what does the remote preparation consist?

Ans. It consists in a careful and continual watchfulness over ourselves, to avoid all voluntary and deliberate sin, and to practise virtue, especially recollection of mind and heart in God, during the whole day.

9. In what does the immediate preparation consist?

Ans. It is comprised in five acts. 1st. Faith in the presence of God. 2nd. Adoration of God's infinite majesty. 3rd. Humiliation of ourselves. 4th. Contrition for our sins, with a purpose of amendment. 5th. Invocation of the assistance of God, and of the prayers of the Blessed Virgin, and of our patron saints, to obtain the grace to meditate well.

Declaration. The director will explain these things viva voce, and will remark, that it is not necessary to learn by heart a formula including all these acts; it is much better to follow the substance of them; for this holy exercise of meditation is more an application of the heart and of the affections, than of the memory or of study. Let it be remarked also, that if you find any particular spiritual nourishment upon any one of these points, dwell upon it, although it should last during the entire time of meditation: receive the spiritual food whenever you can find it. It is good in the beginning to perform these acts in the same order in which they are here set down; afterwards, however, it will be preferable rather to follow the impulse of the heart than any set formula.

10. What is consideration?

Ans. Consideration is the very body of meditation; it consists in applying our mind and heart to the contemplation of some maxim or mystery of our holy religion.

11. Is it good to have a regular plan in the subjects for our consideration?

Ans. Yes, it is very proper, otherwise you will lose much time without coming to any conclusion. If you have a plan marked out, in case of distractions, you will know at least whither to recall your attention; but if you go at random you will be always wandering, without having any firm ground or footing.

12. What is the best plan to be adopted in selecting subjects for meditation?

Ans. Each one is at liberty to follow what he pleases, but for my part I should choose the maxims and the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ.

13. How may we distribute these subjects according to the days of the week?

Ans. On Monday you may meditate upon Death, Tuesday on Judgment, Wednesday on Hell, Thursday on Heaven, Friday on the Death of Christ, Saturday on the Dolours of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and Sunday on the benefits of God. The following week you may occupy yourself solely with the Passion of our Lord, dividing the matter in the following order: On Monday you may consider the agony of Jesus in the garden of Gethsemani, Tuesday his apprehension and appearance before the tribunals, Wednesday his scourging at the pillar and crowning with thorns, Thursday the carriage of his cross to Calvary, Friday his agony and death, Saturday his being taken down from the cross and his burial, and on Sunday his Resurrection.

This plan might serve for one's whole life; but in some circumstances it might be changed; for instance, when any great festival occurs, or when you perceive your heart to be drawn towards any particular subject or point. Remember also that the object of meditation is to excite or stir up the feelings of

our heart, consequently, when this is gained we need go no farther with our consideration, but should dwell there. The consideration of our mind is, as it were, a needle which is used, that the thread of our affections may pass after it through the hole made by it. It is not the needle but the thread which unites our soul to God.

14. In what does the conclusion consist?

Ans. It consists in three several acts. 1st. An examination of the meditation, to see in what manner we have acquitted ourselves of it. 2ndly. Thanksgiving to God for the many lights he has favoured us with. 3rdly. A firm and practical resolution of correcting our vices and imperfections, and of advancing in the way of virtue. This is the fruit of our meditation, and if we do not reap this our meditation is useless. We do not meditate merely for the sake of meditation, but for our correction and perfection. In the time of meditation we put the iron into the fire to be heated; but of what use would that be if we did not beat it? We must then beat the iron of our heart with the hammer of mortification: for it is for this reason alone that it is first put into the furnace of meditation.

The immediate end of meditation is then the *resolution* of our correction and improvement; the mediate is our *real improvement.* The resolutions which we make at the end of meditation should not be merely speculative, but practical; we should not fix upon any thing extraordinary, which perhaps will never happen to us: for instance, to suffer martyrdom, great calumnies. No: but let us purpose to avoid those sins into which we more frequently fall, to practise those virtues occasions of which oftenest present themselves; for example, to suffer with patience the slights and ill-humour we may receive from a companion, to put up with the hasty temper of superiors, to be more careful to preserve recollection during the day, and to be more diligent in the performance of our daily duties, &c.

After the meditation is over we should frequently recall our resolutions to mind, and endeavour to put them in practice; we should try also to be as recollected as possible, so that one meditation may be a preparation for the next.

Note.—I drew up this short instruction for some nuns, who are accustomed to assemble for meditation only once a-day; but for us Passionists who go twice or three times a-day, another may be followed, as will be suggested viva voce by the master, namely, every morning upon some point of the passion of Christ, in the evening on the maxims, at midnight on some other subject, or on the same as on the preceding evening, or on the following morning.

F. Dominic.

EFFECTS OF THE CONFISCATION OF CHURCH PROPERTY AT THE REFORMATION.

There can be no question that the prodigious multiplication of sects in Britain, which strikes foreigners with such astonishment, is mainly to be ascribed, as well as the immense mass of civilised heathenism, which through the whole of the eighteenth century was growing up in the island, to the iniquitous confiscation of the property of the Church which took place at the Reformation. It is well known that the proportion of the tithes of England which belongs to lay impropriators, is more considerable than that which is still in the hands of the Church; and if to them is added the abbey and monastery lands, they would by this time have amounted to a very large annual sum, probably not less than six or seven millions a-year. In Scotland, it is well known, the Church lands at the Reformation were about a third of the whole landed property. They would now, therefore, have produced £1,700,000. a-year, as the entire rental is somewhat above five millions. What a noble fund here existed, formed and set apart by the piety and charity of former ages, for the service of the altar and of the poor—two causes which God hath joined, and no man should put asunder. What incalculable good would it have done, if it had been preserved sacred for its proper destination—sacred from the corruptions, mummery, and despotism of the Romish Church, but preserved inviolate for the support of religion, the relief of suffering, the spread of education! What is it which blights and paralyses all the efforts now made, whether by individuals, voluntary associations, or the state, for the attainment of those truly godlike objects? Is it not ever one thing—the practical impossibility of finding the requisite funds to support the institutions necessary to grapple with the evils, on a scale at all commensurate to their magnitude? The Established Church could not spread for want of funds to erect and endow Churches; meanwhile the population in the manufacturing districts and great towns was rapidly increasing, and, in consequence, part of the people took refuge in the divisions of dissent, part in the oblivion of practical heathenism. Thence the multiplication of sects, the spread of pauperism, the growth of civilised heathenism in the state. The Poor Laws dated from the dissolution of the monasteries; the forty-second of Elizabath stands a durable record of the real origin of that burdensome tax. It was the appropriation of the funds of religion and charity to the gratification of secular rapacity, which has been the cause of the chief religious and social evils under which Great Britain has ever since laboured; and it is it which still presents an invincible obstacle to all the efforts which are made for their removal.—*Blackwood's Magazine.*

THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

A late number of the *Scotsman*, in alluding to the proceedings of the General Assembly of the Free Church, which have just terminated, gives the following summary of what has been lately done by that body:—"In the short space of two years, 530 churches have been erected, at an expense of £335,000, of which £285,000 is already paid. There are 70 other churches in progress, which will be completed in the present year; and it is assumed that 140, in addition to these, will ultimately be wanted, raising the whole number of congregations in connexion with the church, to 740. This is exclusive of forty-two *quoad sacra* churches, possession of which is disputed by the establishment. The whole sum collected for church building is £320,000. Last year the Sustentation Fund produced £62,500, yielding the ministers then employed about £100 a-year each. In the present year the produce of the fund is £75,500, yielding each clergyman £122. This allowance from the central fund is a guarantee to the ministers of the weaker congregations against extreme poverty, but each congregation is expected to add to, or "supplement," the allowance in proportion to its means, and the duty is rarely neglected. Indeed, we believe that most of the clergymen in towns are as well paid in the free church as they were in the establishment, though their brethren in thinly peopled districts are of course less fortunate. In addition to the sums mentioned, about £100,000 has been raised for missions in the two years, and £120,000 more for what is called the congregational fund. Altogether, the sum raised and expended amounts to £725,000, exclusive of £60,000 subscribed for schools and a new college, which will be forthcoming when required. These astonishing pecuniary efforts have been made by a small part of the population of Scotland (probably not exceeding one-fourth), consisting partly of the working, but chiefly of the middle classes. Very few of the landed proprietors, or what are called the gentry, or persons combining fashionable habits with independent means, adhere to the free church. Its strength lies among the serious, thoughtful, and busy classes, including, no doubt, some men of considerable wealth."

THE CREDENCE.

If once, where nearest kindred dwell,
The clouds of strife descend,
Who, of the fatal feud shall tell
The progress and the end?
Time rends the rocks, and bursts the iron bars,
But yields before the strength of fratricidal wars.

* * * * * * *

But sisters still ye are; and hence
Your loving hands should close
In blessed compacts for defence
Against your common foes,—
Nor deal in gestures fierce, of madness born,
Nor bandy to and fro the shafts of hate and scorn.

The tender nurslings of the faith
Our human errors feel,
By gelid caution pruned to death,
Or suffocate by zeal.
From points extreme too darkly glare our eyes,
To see the common ground that in the centre lies.

England and Rome! not yet, not yet,
Is fled the dove of peace!
E'en now your strifes ye may forget,
And bid the thunder cease.
One thoughtful hour your spirits would unite,
Though monsters now ye seem in one another's sight.

And thou, fair isle, whose children wear
A crown of *earthly* glory,
Remember thou hast sons who dare
To scrutinize thy story,
And cannot see the splendour of thy crown
When sacraments are starved and altars falling down.

Thou cherishest unchristian hate
And bugbear dreams of Rome:
But wouldst thou mend a sinking state,
For pity look at home!
That Church on which thy pride its venom flings,
With all her faults, may teach thee many things.

Sinful she is, yet not, like thee,
By little but by much;
Nor are her priests condemned to see
The crowd, beneath their touch,
Grow rude and rampant, and the golden chain
Of God's mysterious gifts profanely snapt in twain.

With her, to cast contempt on Faith
Is sacrilege and treason;
With thee, whate'er thy teaching saith,
Thy practice leans on Reason.
E'en of thy priests, for one who trembling reads,
A thousand scorn the past, its councils and its creeds.

Hence countless sects, whose swarms infest
Thy land like frogs of Nile,
Till unity is held a jest,
Or made a weapon vile,
By loud, unblushing men who deal in sounds,
To strike a staggering Church and irritate her wounds.

Behold! the spider makes her bed,
And weaves her trembling lines,
Where once the credence, meekly spread,
Received the sacred signs.
Ere yet THAT PRESENCE, which thy sons deny,
Had on the mystic food descended from on high.

And on the altar's face adored,
Whence angels shrink afraid,
The dreadful offerings of the Lord
By menial hands are laid.
Ah! who can tell what reckoning may remain
For her who lightly views intrusion so profane?

O Truth, thy voice divine is hushed
E'en at the fount of learning!
Thy dearest son, unjustly crushed,
In silent shame is burning!
Say whither shall we fly, when strife and sin
Are raging all around, and all grows dark within?

Voices from the Early Church.—Burns.

AN INGENIOUS PIECE OF CHARITY.

A poor widow of Rome, mother of an only daughter both young and handsome, got her living by her own and her daughter's labour, and rubbed on poorly, but yet honestly. Now it happened, that this widow falling sick, and her daughter having enough to do in attending her, their work went on so faintly, and their gains came in so slowly, that at her recovery she found her purse as much exhausted as her person had been. Whereupon being called on for the quarter's rent for her chamber, and not knowing what to do, she was advised by her confessor to go to cardinal Montalto (who gave public audience thrice a week to all the poor in Rome) and to beg as much of him as would pay her little debt. Pressed therefore by her great necessity, and emboldened by the fame of the charity of this good cardinal, she entered the palace, and found him in his great hall, giving ear and alms to all that could give a satisfactory account of their wants. In her turn, she and her young daughter approached, and expressing modestly her wants caused by her three months' sickness, she humbly besought his eminence to bestow *five crowns* to pay the rent due for her chamber, and thus pacify her landlord, who otherwise threatened to put her out of doors. The cardinal observing as much modesty in her looks, as sickness in her countenance, and liking well that she did not go about to frighten him into charity, by urging the danger of being forced at length to expose her daughter's virtue (a common rhetorical figure of beggars in all countries) wrote down on a little paper, "*50 crowns to be given to the bearer*," and folding it up, desired it to be presented to his steward below at the entrance of the palace. She did so with humble prayers of thankfulness, when the steward counted out fifty crowns, and begged her to sign a receipt. The poor woman seeing *fifty* crowns counted out for her, when she had asked but for five, and fearing that the steward might have some improper design on her handsome daughter, told him smartly, that though she was poor, she was honest; and that she scorned any such corruption or bribery. The faithful steward civilly replied, that he did not understand her words. "Nor I your deeds," said she. "I asked the cardinal for five crowns: he granted my request; why then did you offer me fifty?" To show his innocency, the steward showed his master's written order for 50 crowns. "Then your master's hand," said she, "in a hurry outshot his intention. I asked him for five crowns, and more in conscience I cannot take." The steward, though he knew his master's generosity, yet to remove all scruples from the poor woman, locked up his money and papers, and desired her to return with him to the cardinal to clear up the doubt. The cardinal on hearing from him the whole of what had passed, and of her fear that he had committed an error in writing 50 crowns for 5: "It is true," said he, "my hand was mistaken indeed;" and taking up his pen, as if to correct the mistake, he put in another cipher, and so made it 500 crowns: and now reading it aloud to the steward and the poor woman, commanded the latter to portion her daughter with that money; and if it were not enough, to come to him again and he would make it up. A true Roman Charity.

THE SEA.

When we place ourselves upon the shore, and from thence behold that immense body of water, stretching away on all sides as far as the eye can reach; and when we consider how large a portion of the globe is covered in like manner, what a noble idea are we hereby enabled to form of the immensity of that Being in whose sight the ocean is no more than a drop!

When we see a mass of water rising up by a gradual ascent, till the sky seems to descend and close upon it, a thought immediately strikes us—what is it which prevents these waters from breaking in upon and overflowing the land, as they appear in heaps so much above it? It is God's will that it should be so; and when He gives the word, the obedient waves bow themselves and retire. How grand and awful is the noise of the sea, even as the sound of the voice of the Almighty when He speaketh!

Pleasing is the variety of prospects which the sea at different times affords us: for one while calm and unruffled, it reflects a bright and beautiful image of the light which shineth upon it from above; at another, it is dark and cloudy, stormy and tempestuous, agitated from the very bottom, and its "restless waters cast up mire and dirt."

To behold the ebbing and flowing of the tide is an amusement ever new. By this contrivance of Divine wisdom, the whole mass of sea-water is kept in continual motion, which, together with the salt contained in it, preserves it from corrupting, and poisoning the world. At one part of the day, therefore, the ocean seems to be leaving us, and going to other more favoured coasts; but at the stated period, as if it had only paused to recover itself, it returns again by gradual advances, till it be arrived at its former height. There is an ebb and a flow in all human affairs, and a turn of events may render him happy who is now miserable; the vessel which is stranded may yet be borne upon the waters, may put out again to sea, and be blessed with a prosperous voyage.

Nor is the sea more wonderful in itself than it is beneficial to mankind. From its surface vapours are continually arising, drawn upwards by the heat of the sun, which, by degrees, formed into clouds, drop fatness on our fields and gardens, causing even the wilderness to smile, and the valleys, covered over with corn, to laugh and sing.

We are likewise indebted to the ocean for many springs, which have their origin from the great deep beneath, with which the sea communicates. These, arising in vapour through the lower parts of the earth, break forth and issue in streams, many of which joined form rivers, and so go back to the place from whence they came, but not till, by their innumerable turnings and windings, they have refreshed and enriched large tracts of country in their passage.

Barren and desolate as the sea appears to those who only look upon it, and search not into it, yet within its bosom are contained creatures exceeding in number those that walk and creep upon the land. The industry and ingenuity of man have found means to draw forth these inhabitants of the waters from their deepest recesses; and while they afford to some an agreeable variety of wholesome food, they support multitudes of others whose employment it is to procure them, an employment, healthy, honest, carried on in peace and quietness, without tumult, noise, strife, and bloodshed, affording to those who are engaged in it continual opportunities of beholding "the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep."

By the invention of shipping, and the art of navigation, the sea is made, in reality, to join those nations which it appears to divide, the communication being often far more easy and expeditious by water than it would have been by land. The riches of both the Indies are wafted to our shores; we sit at home and feast upon the productions of every country under heaven, while the superfluity of our own commodities is disposed of to advantage abroad. A friendly intercourse is opened between the most distant lands; savages are humanized, and become proficients in the arts and sciences; the Gospel is preached among them, and the light of truth made to shine upon those who sat in darkness and the shadow of death. A large vessel, with all its conveniences, constructed in such a manner as to go upon the surface of the water, and to brave the fury of the winds and waves, is, perhaps, the master-piece of human contrivance; and the Psalmist, when contemplating the wonders of the ocean, cries out in admiration—"There go the ships!"

The sea may likewise be considered as an emblem of the world, and of what is passing therein. Under a smiling, deceitful surface, both conceal dangerous rocks and quicksands, on which the unskilful mariner will strike and be lost; both abound with creatures pursuing and devouring each other, the small and weak becoming a prey to the great and powerful, while in both there is a grand "destroyer, a Leviathan taking his pastime," and seeking the perdition of all. In the voyage of life, we may set out with a still sea and a fair sky, but, ere long, cares and sorrows, troubles and afflictions, overtake us. At God's word, either to punish or to prove us, the stormy wind ariseth and lifteth up the waves; we are carried sometimes up to heaven with hope, sometimes down to the deep with despair, and our soul melteth because of trouble. Then it is that our heavenly Father shows us what poor helpless creatures we are without Him, and tribulation becomes the parent of devotion. If we cry unto the Lord in our trouble, He will deliver us out of our distress, and we shall arrive in safety at the desired haven, where all the tossings and agitations of human affairs shall cease, and where there shall be "no more Sea."

A FRAGMENT.

Along the radiant ocean
The parting sunbeams glow,
In bright and playful motion
The sparkling billows flow,
The sky that roofs the western world
Is bright with glory rich and rare,
As if the veil from heaven furled
Disclosed the beauty dwelling there!
But lo! while thus entrancing
The brilliant prospect glows,
The shades of night advancing
Dark o'er its beauties close.
Thus oft misfortune glory shrouds
And dims gay Beauty's loveliness;
Thus grief the sky of pleasure clouds
And darkens human happiness.
Thus to the smile of gladness
Succeeds the sigh of woe;
And thus do tears of sadness
From eyes of pleasure flow.
This moment's joys seem heavenly bright,
But, like these golden hues of eve,
They soon dissolve in sorrow's night
And man in utter darkness leave.
Then who on joys so fleeting
Will fix the eye of love?
Who for a world so cheating
Will lose the one above?

ST. JOHN'S SEMINARY
3 8151 001 26636 7